

We Count on Your Hands

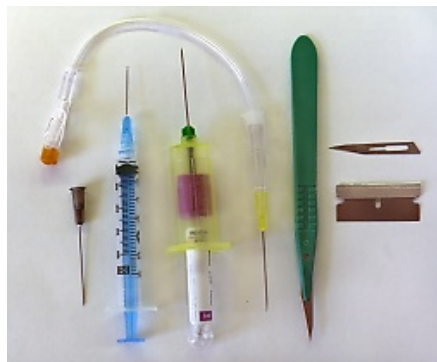
Message from Mike Wisherop, May 2016



What would you do if you had a temporary loss of one of your hands? You might be able to get by, but it may not be easy. We need our hands to perform safe and efficient work in laboratories, as well as offices. Hand and finger injuries have been trending upwards within MSD. In a little over a year there were 15 total reported hand/finger injuries, nine of which were cuts or puncture wounds, and six were ergonomic related. All of these injuries were preventable.

Some identified factors contributing to hand/finger injuries are:

- Using the wrong tool for the task
- Improper tool use
- Hurried work
- Improper storage/disposal of sharps
- Repetitive tasks
- Prolonged discomfort during task



To help prevent injuries to fingers and hands, use ISM. Determine what needs to be accomplished, and plan your time accordingly. If you don't have enough time to perform the necessary tasks, reschedule the work.

Identify what hazards can cause an injury, and how you can control those hazards. Use the right tool for the job, and make sure you know how to use it properly. Keep the sharp end away from your hands. Keep your hands away from pinch points. Store tools, such as syringes, scalpels and razor blades with sharp ends protected. If work is causing discomfort over a prolonged period of time, contact your EH&S technician to assist with an ergonomic evaluation.

Finally, share your experience with others so we can learn from you. If there is a safer way to perform a task inform your Activity Lead, or mention it at a group meeting. You might prevent an injury, which is a heroic thing to do.

Thank you,

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